

Message Text

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16

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 FEA-02 INT-08

DRC-01 SCI-06 /138 W

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R 252021Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7429

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, UK

SUBJECT: THREE-DAY WORK WEEK TO CONTINUE

1. ENERGY MINISTER PATRICK JENKIN TOLD COMMONS TODAY THAT 3-DAY ELECTRICITY WEEK MUST BE MAINTAINED. HE SAID GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN PREPARING TO ANNOUNCE RELAXATION OF RESTRICTIONS, "BUT YESTERDAY'S STRIKE BALLOT DECISION BY EXECUTIVE OF NUM HAS INTRODUCED A NEW DIMENSION. IN FACE OF THIS FURTHER THREAT TO POWER STATION COAL SUPPLIES, GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THAT IT WOULD BE IMPRUDENT TO INTRODUCE EASEMENTS WE HAD HOPED." GOVERN-
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MENT DID MAKE ONE CHANGE, HOWEVER. FIRMS FORMERLY RE-

QUIRED TO WORK THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY NOW HAVE OPTION OF WORKING WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY.

2. THE CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRY'S INITIAL REACTION WAS OBVIOUS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE PROSPECT OF EASING POWER RESTRICTIONS HAD BEEN SHELVED, "BUT WE FEEL INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE WILL ACCEPT THIS AND WILL UNDERSTAND THAT GOVERNMENT MUST ACT CAUTIOUSLY." CBI EXPRESSED DELIGHT THAT SATURDAY WORKING COULD NOW BE REMOVED.

3. PREDICTABLY, LABOR'S TRADE AND INDUSTRY SPOKESMAN IN COMMONS WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT AND SAID COUNTRY WOULD FIND IT UTTERLY AMAZING THAT NO NEW MOVES WERE BEING MADE TO END CRISIS.

4. MINE WORKER LEADER JOE GORMLEY DESCRIBED STATEMENT AS "BLOODY DAFT."

5. COMMENT. WITH YESTERDAY'S DECISION BY MINE WORKERS TO TAKE STRIKE BALLOT, PRUDENCE CLEARLY REQUIRED GOVERNMENT TO TAKE CONTINUED STEPS TO CONTROL COAL CONSUMPTION.

ANNENBERG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONTROLS, INDUSTRIAL CONTROLS, POLITICAL STRIKES, COAL MINING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LONDON01190
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740116/aaaaaojo.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24-Jul-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <29 MAY 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THREE-DAY WORK WEEK TO CONTINUE
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005